NARRATIVES

Eyewitness Statements

Nonexhaustive List

AWAKE X ÆONS
OCT 23, 2023

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[video timestamps are in brackets]
"Direct witness quotes are in italics and quotations"

updates will be documented below
Original post: 10.23.23
Updated: 10.25.23 7:15pm. (WGN, Michael Schwartz)

CBS News Chicago - VIDEO

[10:56] Reporter announces a shooter on Walker Brother's roof, qualifies it hasn't been stated by officials yet.
[28:03] Reporter gives first hand account statement from a family who was at the parade and ran for cover "*after they saw a shooter on the roof*" and heard shots that "*went on for minutes*"
[28:27] Reporter heard shooter described as carrying a yellow backpack on the roof of one of the downtown stores
[37:40] Security expert calls in stating a deliberate, statement making event. Repeatedly uses both singular and plural forms of gunman/gunmen at large
[50:36] Reporter confuses two witness statements and erroneously names Shawn Cotreau, but states a shooter was seen by a witness on the roof of Walker Brothers
[1:10:01] Aerial is shown of officer[s] on Gearhead Roof. Reporter states "*it seems to be the center of the investigation very early because witnesses say we saw a shooter on the roof.*"
[2:54:00] Reporters announce the construction site (green metal building) at Elm and 2nd is a focus of Law Enforcement investigation.

1. MICHAEL SCHWARTZ
Saw the shooter crouched on the ground in the corner in front of Uncle Dan's (Gearhead). Looked in the shooter's eyes.
Shooter was slim, in a military crouch, firing a rifle with a sight.
"The roof stuff is ABSOLUTELY FALSE, I don't know where they're getting this roof stuff."

2. GABRIELLA MARTINEZ (GABRIELLA VICENCIO on Fox32) [1:04:44]
"I actually saw the shooter on top of Ross Cosmetics. He was in the roof of Ross Cosmetics shooting towards the angle. Not like towards.. I don't know if its towards the parade or people but like towards where we were. And we were all ducked down. I started screaming for [my family] and I think he was reloading, I don't know. When you're in that situation you really don't know what to do because you start getting into a panic mode. We ran. As soon as I was able to see Uncle Dan's I pushed [my daughter] into the store."

3. (F) SUNSET FOODS EMPLOYEE
Was part of the parade with colleagues and lined up. Heard "*fireworks and saw a man standing on a rooftop.*"

4. "MARIA" AND NEPHEW
Were grazed by bullets; nephew's leg was grazed "*but at first I didn't feel it.*" Both ran into Gearhead.

5. SADE (reporter) [2:44:30]
Shooter was "*very discreet and difficult to see*."

6. UNNAMED [2:52:00]
Directly in front of ______ building, "*sprayed scene with a long gun.*"
Shooter's "*face and baseball hat are seared into his memory.*"

7. LYNN SWEET (Chicago SunTimes Journalist / Captured video of Klezmer Band) [2:57:00]
14 minutes after parade started saw people fleeing. Saw bodies wounded and blood.
"*Frozen in time*."

8. SHAWN COTREAU - first witness to call in at [01:50]
Was located in front of Gearhead and heard fireworks. Was located "*only 10 feet away from where he was shooting.*"Saw a man *"standing on the roof of Ross in a gray-brown-ish uniform with a hat pulled down*" and could see shots fire off a tree. *"He was pointing down towards the center of the street. He was almost across from Walker Brothers and he was pointing across, shooting the gun across the street."* Ran with family down Central and tried to brace for cover. Hid in a back parking lot until they could get to their car. *"Felt like the gunshots went on for minutes. Not like, 20 shots." "Things were in flames and the trees were getting pelted by bullets."*

9. PAT MELTON (phone / Senior Producer, Investigative Unit) [3:23:31]
"Our law enforcement sources are saying it appears that the shooting suspect was firing down, uh, at the crowd, from a rooftop at the Uncle Dan's camping and travel store which is along the parade route."

CBS NEWS JULY 5th 2022

1. MELISSA CARLSON
"We were late, in an alley that is parallel to Central Avenue. I live on and grew up on Central Avenue. We were walking down this allow that sort of spilled into the parade route and we started to hear - pop pop pop pop - this was very loud. And it continued on and we kept walking and as we got closer there was a whole other series of pops. There was another pause and then there was another round. That's when we saw a wave of people."
Tells the story of Laurie Dann that occurred when she was 15 years old.

NEWS NATION VIDEO

1. MICHAEL SCHWARTZ
Directly across the street, east of Walker Brothers. Saw the shooter "*crouched about two feet off the ground, behind a lamp post/stop sign" in front of Uncle Dan's* (Gearhead).
"*I saw him get up and flee down 2nd street, North. I believe I could recognize his gait from anywhere." "We were no more than six feet from a woman who was killed. My wife had a spatter of blood on her shirt. I was pinged by some debris but it didn't break my skin."*

FOX32 CHICAGO VIDEO

1. UNNAMED
Northshore resident for 30+ years. Heard "*machine guns but had no idea where the shooter was or how many shooters.*" Called in to Fox32 from across the street of Sunset Foods; reported rumor of gunman inside Sunset Foods with hostages.
*Sunset Foods at Green Bay and Central

2. GILAT ZAMOS [07:33] (Owner of My Best Friend's Closet)
Was running late to the parade and was running through Sunset Park. "*Heard sirens and people screaming 'shots fired.'*" Mentions owning a business a block from shooting twice, then mentions owning a business "*next to Anthropologie on the corner of Green Bay and Central." "Cannot believe this is not enough to scare people and do something about these laws gun laws already."*

3. STATE SENATOR JULIE MORRISON [20:30]
Heard 'pops' and thought it was fireworks, then saw people running saying "there's a shooter." Was sitting in back of convertible in parade line."*Will never go to a parade again.*" Going to Springfield "*next week to make some serious changes. If the Federal Government won't, the State will."*

4. BRUCE ROSENBERG (Member of CERT)
*(CERT = Highland Park Emergency Response Team. Neon green shirts)
Was in Sunset Park when Law Enforcement approached with "*helmets on and rifles out to clear the park.*" Received a "*vague description of someone in a white shirt.*" Heard *"multiple reports of where the shooter was, is "just now hearing it may have been the NW corner"'* (Ross building)

[28:27] BRUCE ROSENBERG AND JONI
(reporter) JONI: Heard he was *"described as carrying a yellow backpack on the roof of one of the downtown stores."*
BRUCE: Heard a man give an interview that was there with wife and child in stroller in front of Walker Brothers. The man indicated the Roof roof. Also has *"heard he had been perched atop Uncle Dan's"* (Gearhead).

5. DR. GARY KAUFMAN [37:29]
Location: in front of Walker BrothersHeard a barrage of many loud pops, got down then ran ran into lower garage. "*No way to tell exactly where shots were coming from*" due to being *"very loud and echoed."*

6. GABRIELLA VICENCIO (GABRIELLA MARTINEZ on WGN & CBS)
[1:02:21] Location: in front of Gearhead
"*Was live on Facebook, then closed it to go on Snapchat.*" Heard fireworks and later realized by the panicked crowd that it was shots. Turned around and *"saw a shooter on the roof of Ross shooting toward the crowd."* "*Body went numb, fell to the ground in a panic.*" Heard rapid fire of 20-30 shots. Saw 2 women in Gearhead with gunshot wounds to legs.

7. DOUG CUMMINGS (Security Expert)[1:28:45]
"*Very unusual to have a mass shooter at large. Usually in these types of scenarios the shooter has either already committed suicide or been dealt with by the police.*"

ABC7 CHICAGO VIDEO

[3:41:21] ABC Chicago airs the Rainan Eli (apartment POV video filmed from window across the street from Ross) video. In the next 2-3 cycles, they would not run the full video again.
At the very end of the video, a cloud of dark smoke quickly appears above what looks like Gearhead.

1. JASON MUELVER [4:40:28]
Volunteer first responder with limited CPR experience. Did not describe the shooter or scene at the time.

2. DR. DAVID BAUM [5:36:32]
Applied pressure to wounds and started IVs. A lot of injuries to lower extremities, legs, and "*someone I know was shot in the foot.*"
(& later DEBRA BAUM [6:32:41])

3. JON WILL [5:37:05]
Was sitting by the tracks with 97 y/o mother, nephew and his wife, and a dog. Heard firecrackers then saw the crowd running.

4. JONATHAN BIRNBERG [5:39:48]
States being a resident who lives nearby the scene. Does not describe the scene, seeing a shooter, or having been at the parade at all. Says "*it's scary.*"

5. DOUG MARSHALL [5:40:01]
Heard "*bambambambam*" and assumed it was fireworks. "*Everybody was frozen.*"

JULY 8TH 2022 - VIDEO

DAVID SALLACK
Originally thought he heard fireworks and looked up to see a gunman on top of Ross. *"I saw a black line appear quickly and then come back down."* David, his wife, and his son were seated along Central Avenue not far from where Cooper Roberts and his family were seated.
(Sallack scrolls through photos on his phone from the parade and reveals his location as being directly across the street from the former Sweet Home Gelato location - at 615 Central Avenue, before they relocated to 1853 2nd St. (the former Panera Building) July 15th, 2023 - slightly east of center of Port Clinton Square.
*From the street view, the roof of Ross is heavily obstructed by tree foliage.)

WGN NEWS CHICAGO - VIDEO

1. HUGO AGUILAR [07:11]
Grew up in Highland Park. Saw squad cars driving past quickly but did not witness the shooting or see a shooter.

2. GABRIELLA MARTINEZ (GABRIELLA VICENCIO on Fox32)
[1:15:10] [12:27pm CST] Location: In front of Uncle Dan's (Gearhead) *"Well, I mean, I wasn't really planning to go to the parade just because I'm not in the mood of any celebration whatsoever.. But yesterday my sister-in-law called me and said we should meet up and go, 'it'll be fun for the kids' - so then around 9:45 I arrived with my daughter, my 9 year old daughter, to the parade and she was really excited to see the parade and I saw my niece.. I'm not gonna give her name.. And her son, her husband, her newborn baby, and we were just talking, you know, the parade.. We had just saw the pets go by, then I think around 10:05 the parade started, the official parade started, and the fire department went by, and then the horses went by, and then my son was actually going to be in the band parade but then he decided not to go at the last minute, so then the marching band passed by, and as soon as they passed by, like probably 3-4 minutes later, we started hearing what I thought were fireworks in the beginning, so I didn't really think anything of it. And then I kinda glanced and started seeing people start panicking, and then I looked, **cause I was standing right in front of where Uncle Dan's store used to be, in that corner, Central and 2nd, and the shooter.. One of the shooters, was actually on top of the Ross cosmetics buildings [sic], aiming towards his, aiming to his left side, which is where we were** so he was, he was facing that way [pointing down]. We all went into panic mode, we all ducked down in the beginning, and then as soon as I guess, I kinda heard ten to twenty shots, and then I started getting really panicky and really nervous. I went to get up and I started screaming out their names. I saw my daughter, I grabbed her, she slipped out of my hands twice, and I was just screaming out her name and **I lost my niece and her husband and then we were running towards Uncle Dan's** and I saw, I bumped into a 95 year old lady, which I didn't mean to but as I saw her fall my instinct was to grab her head first and then I shoved my daughter into the store, and then I grabbed her to get her up and we ran inside the store away from all the windows. A**nd then I started calling my ex husband, which he arrived within the next like 5 minutes .."***

[ABOUT THE SHOOTER] "***Well I mean I didn't really see, like, who he was, I mean I just saw a person .. with a gun.. Shooting towards us. And I just glanced real quick.** So it's just like, okay yeah it is happening."*

[JACKIE: EARLIER YOU DESCRIBED HIM AS A CAUCASIAN] "***Once we got into my babysitters house, my friends house, everybody on facebook was kind of like describing him now, that he is caucasian with black hair** and I guess there's two shooters now"*

3. MICHAEL SCHWARTZ [35:35] [11:49AM CST]
Location: Port Clinton Square

"***We were directly across the street just east of the Walker Brothers**. My wife is in a wheelchair and I was there with my newborn grandson who was in a baby carriage and my mother-in-law. When I first heard the shots, people started running and yelling 'SHOOTER' and I couldn't believe it, **I just thought 'this can't happen', so I stood up, and I saw this guy crouched down behind the stop sign and the lamp post in front of what used to be Uncle Dan's.***

*People started fleeing and **the first round was maybe forty or fifty shots and he stopped and must've reloaded.. I didn't see at that point.. I got everybody down as flat as we could.***
Immediately to the left of us he started shooting again and a woman went down, and she was dead, she was maybe six feet from us in a huge pool of blood.
*I **think that's what spattered my wife, my wife has blood on her shirt.** And there were maybe seven or eight people laying there who I don't think were killed but they weren't moving much."*

[REPORTER] **So to be clear, I'm sorry to interrupt, but you're saying the shooter was on the ground?** Because we had gotten other reports that potentially -

[MICHAEL] "***THAT'S ABSOLUTELY FALSE. I saw this guy shooting. I saw where he was. I saw his EYES and there was no question, this was the ONLY shooter and he was on the ground. I don't know where they're getting this roof stuff, I don't know.***

And by the way, it must have taken the cops five full minutes, at least it felt like that, before ANYBODY responded. And a BUNCH of them had just gone by in the parade. Why there was nobody staked out in the parade, I have no idea… Maybe questions for another day."

[REPORTER] "**Did it appear that he was acting alone?**"

[MICHAEL] "***YES***."

[REPORTER] "In generic terms can you describe his age, his make up, etc.?"

[MICHAEL] "*I can tell you he was slim enough - if he was overweight I could tell. And he was **sort of athletic because he was in a crouch – a true military crouch**. I mean, you couldn't tell how tall he was because he was crouching.* "

[REPORTER] Did you happen to see what type of weapon?

[MICHAEL] "*It was a rifle with a sight and it was another thing that was obscuring his face - he was LOOKING DOWN THAT SIGHT. I couldn't tell you if* "[his face was camouflaged].

[REPORTER] Was this guy methodical? Was he angry and panicked? Was he emotional?

[MICHAEL] "*YES* [methodical] ***he was very military style methodical.** I mean he was in this perfect military crouch and he was shooting in our direction. The people six feet from us were hit. Something hit me, some piece of something or other, but didn't pierce my skin."*

[REPORTER] How did you escape?

[MICHAEL] "***I saw him run down 2nd street, north down 2nd street, and of course he disappeared behind the building** but I knew he wasn't about to come back that way, **he was escaping to the north and we were parked to the south."***

[REPORTER] **Michael did you see a yellow bag? There's been some police talk of the shooter carrying a big, yellow, military style bag.**

[MICHAEL] "***No, I did not see that.** In fact when he turned around and ran, **I don't think he was carrying anything.***"

ARTICLES

CHICAGO TRIBUNE

GABRIELLA MARTINEZ / GABRIELLA VICENCIO

Gabriela Martinez-Vicencio, of neighboring Highwood, went to the parade with her 9-year-old daughter and met up with other family members. She said she and a relative thought initially the blasts were fireworks.

"I just fell to the ground … my daughter hugged, I guess, my nephew and my niece. Then as soon as I was able to reconnect myself, I grabbed my daughter because I started screaming out for everybody's name that I saw and then we ran," Martinez-Vicencio, 33, said outside of NorthShore Highland Park Hospital, where she was told her niece was being treated for a minor injury after possibly scraping her leg while running away from the gunfire.

In the mayhem, Martinez-Vicencio bumped into a woman and they both fell to the ground. When she got back to her feet, she pushed her daughter into a store and tried to find a place to hide her. "*I started crying. We all started crying.*" *In this recounting of events, Gabriela's parade location at the time of the shooting isn't determined. She doesn't recount looking back at the Ross building or seeing a shooter on the roof. There are conflicting details between this recounting of the woman she bumped into and the ones given to TV media in which the woman's exact age was given as well as Gabriela shielding the woman's head as they fell.

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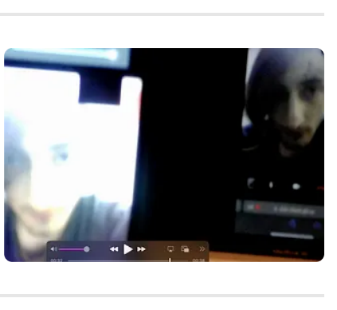

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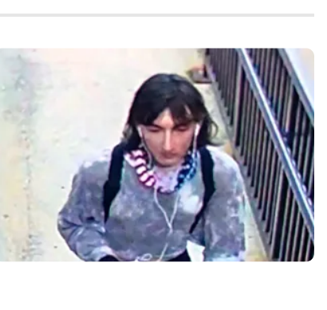

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